

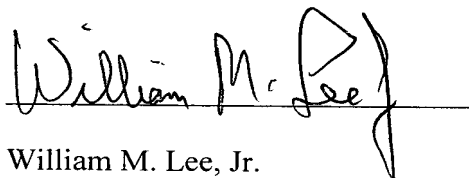
Office is requested to cancel any multiple dependent claims without prejudice before calculation of the national filing fee for the United States

The International Preliminary Examination Report reaches the conclusion that claims 1 through 31 of the International Application (corresponding to claims 50 through 81 of the present application) meet the requirements of novelty and inventive step (nonobviousness). It is submitted that the same results should occur in the United States.

Examination of the application on its merits is awaited.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: February 12, 2002

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "William M. Lee, Jr.", is written over a horizontal line.

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